

# When a wildfire is burning near your home

How to read an evacuation notice, when to leave, and what to do with the time you have.



## Your safety comes first. Always.

A house can be rebuilt and belongings can be replaced — your family cannot. If fire officials or law enforcement issue an evacuation order for your area, leave immediately. Do not stay behind to protect your home, and do not wait for a second notice. Nothing in this brochure is worth a single minute of delay.

### STEP ONE

## Know what the notice means

Counties use three escalating levels to tell you how much time you have. The wording varies — some use Ready, Set, Go instead of numbers — but the meaning is the same. Sign up for your county's emergency alerts today, and during a fire follow your county sheriff, local fire agency, and local news for updates. Conditions can change faster than officials can notify you.

#### LEVEL 1

### Be Ready

*There is potential danger in your area. Evacuation is voluntary. Pack a go-kit, review your route out and a backup route, keep your vehicle fueled and backed into the driveway, and decide now where you would go. Anyone who needs extra time — young children, older adults, anyone with medical needs, pets or livestock — should start moving.*

#### LEVEL 2

### Be Set

*There is significant danger nearby. Be ready to leave at a moment's notice — or leave now. Keep your go-kit in the vehicle and stay dressed and alert, including overnight. You do not need to wait for another notice to go, and emergency services may not be able to reach you if conditions turn suddenly.*

#### LEVEL 3

### Go Now

*There is extreme danger. Leave immediately. Do not stop to pack, and do not stay to prepare or defend your home. Drive with headlights on, follow the route officials give you, and let family know when you are safe. Do not return until public safety officials announce the area is open.*

## Leave earlier than the notice tells you if...

Waiting keeps roads full and slows the crews trying to reach your neighborhood.

- Someone at home has limited mobility, oxygen, or other medical equipment
- You have pets, horses, or livestock to move
- Your property has one road out, or a long driveway
- You do not have a vehicle and need a ride arranged
- Smoke is already heavy, or the wind has picked up
- You simply feel unsafe — that is reason enough

Follow the instructions of local fire and law enforcement officials. Their direction always comes first.

## STEP TWO

### Not under an evacuation order? Use the time well.

Most homes lost to wildfire are not overtaken by a wall of flame — they are ignited by wind-blown embers that land on a roof, in a gutter, or against something flammable beside a wall. These steps take minutes, not hours. Work through them while you are calm, and stop the moment conditions change or an order is issued.

#### OUTSIDE THE HOME

- ☐ Move anything that burns away from the house — patio furniture and cushions, doormats, planters, firewood, trash bins, grills, portable propane tanks.
- ☐ Clear dry leaves and needles from the roof, gutters, deck, under stairs, and against walls and fences.
- ☐ Shut off the gas at the propane tank or the meter, and turn off pilot lights.
- ☐ Connect garden hoses and fill buckets or trash cans with water for firefighters — but do not leave sprinklers running, which drains the pressure crews need.
- ☐ Block ember entry points. Cover attic, eave, crawlspace, and foundation vents with fine metal mesh.
- ☐ Help the crews. Lean a metal ladder against the house, prop gates open, keep your address visible.
- ☐ Back the vehicle in, facing out — windows up, keys with you, at least half a tank of fuel.

#### Please don't:

- Stay behind to defend your home
- Climb on the roof in wind or heavy smoke
- Leave sprinklers or water running
- Drive through smoke, flames, or closed roads
- Return before officials clear the area
- Assume someone else called 911 — if you see fire, call

#### INSIDE THE HOME

- ☐ Close every window and exterior door to keep embers out, but leave doors unlocked so firefighters can get in.
- ☐ Close interior doors, pet doors, and the fireplace damper. Turn off the air conditioning.
- ☐ Take down curtains and blinds and move furniture to the center of the room, away from glass.
- ☐ Leave the lights on, inside and out. Your home is far easier to find in heavy smoke or after dark.
- ☐ Stage everything by the door — go-kit, medications, chargers, cash, pet carriers, sturdy shoes, flashlight.
- ☐ Protect your lungs. Keep N95 respirators on hand and run an air filter while smoke is heavy.

#### Pack the six P's — in this order

People and pets. Papers — policy, ID, deeds. Prescriptions, eyeglasses, medical equipment. Phones and chargers. Pictures and irreplaceable keepsakes. Plastic — cards, cash, checkbook.

### Five minutes now makes a claim far easier later

- Take video of every room — open the closets and drawers — plus the garage, outbuildings, and all four sides of the house. Save it to the cloud or email it to yourself.
- Bring your policy number and your agent's contact information with you.
- Keep receipts for lodging, meals, and supplies after you evacuate. Your policy may help with those additional living expenses.

#### REPORT A CLAIM, DAY OR NIGHT 877-425-2580

Our Claims Response Center answers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also file on our member site or in our mobile app.



Mutual of Enumclaw · 1460 Wells Street, Enumclaw, WA 98022 · [mutualofenumclaw.com](http://mutualofenumclaw.com)  
24/7 Claims Response Center 877-425-2580 · Member Services 800-366-5551, Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific This brochure is general safety information, not a statement of insurance coverage or a guarantee that a home will survive a wildfire. Refer to your policy or talk with your independent agent for coverage details. In an emergency, always follow the instructions of local fire and law enforcement officials.